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ABSTRACT

An investigation of Federal funding for Afro-American related projects for 1978 through 1983 shows that, during this period, research in the areas where Afro-American research is overwhelmingly concentrated--the social sciences and the humanities--has not kept pace with the substantial increases apparent in the funding of research in the "hard sciences." In terms of overall Federal support, the total available funding in 1984 for psychology and social science is probably less in real terms (given inflation) than the amount available in 1978; humanities support through the National Endowment for the Humanities has also declined dramatically. More specifically, Afro-American research has suffered from the shift in Federal priorities toward the "hard sciences." The investigation shows that only the National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH) has continued to emphasize Afro-American-related research, and even within this agency the number of studies of major relevance has decreased. Furthermore, the NIMH total budget represents a very small proportion of the total Federal research budget. Given this discouraging state of affairs, scholars in the field must work concertedly to counter these shifts and influence funding policies--as the fate of Afro-American Studies is very much a function of research funding, the destiny of the field itself is at stake. (RDN)

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IS AFRO-AMERICAN STUDIES RESEARCH IN JEOPARDY? A Review of Recent Trends in Federal Research Support

by M. Belinda Tucker

In the current academic climate, a significant measure of the viability of a discipline is the quality of the research it encompasses. In turn, the quality of a science, as well as its practitioners, is judged on the basis of the empirical work produced by its scholars. This fact is no less true in multidisciplinary fields such as ethnic studies. In general, however, as the cost of doing even small scale research has become substantial, the conduct of research has become contingent upon the ability to generate research funding.

In recent years, scholars of Afro-American Studies have been concerned that funding for research on Afro-American issues has become increasingly difficult to obtain, thus threatening both the fate of the field and the individuals within it. One basis for this belief is the Reagan Administration's decision to emphasize the "hard sciences" (e.g., biological, physical, computer) while de-emphasizing the social sciences and the humanities. Research in Afro-American Studies is overwhelmingly concentrated in the latter two areas. A second source of this belief is the perception that Afro-American Studies, relative to other areas of ethnic studies, has become (in the view of funding agencies) "passé" while the increasing visibility of Latinos and Asian-Americans has led to a greater focus on their concerns. In this perspective, even if the size of the ethnic studies "pie" has remained stable, now more groups are competing for larger shares.

We recently sought to determine whether the perception of diminishing support for Afro-American research was justified, and if so, what factors were contributing to the decline. In February of 1984, we contacted the primary sources of federal research support for Afro-American Studies and requested information about the funding of Afro-American related projects specifically, and ethnic studies support generally, over the past [illegible] years. In particular, we requested: numbers of projects funded (compared to the total by discipline type), lists of ethnic projects and principal investigators funded, and total dollar support of ethnic projects (compared to the total by discipline type). Letters were sent to the heads and other relevant staff in the Alcohol, Drug Abuse, and Mental Health Administration (ADAMHA), the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA), the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH), the National Institutes of Health (NIH), and the National Science Foundation (NSF). It should be noted that ADAMHA includes the

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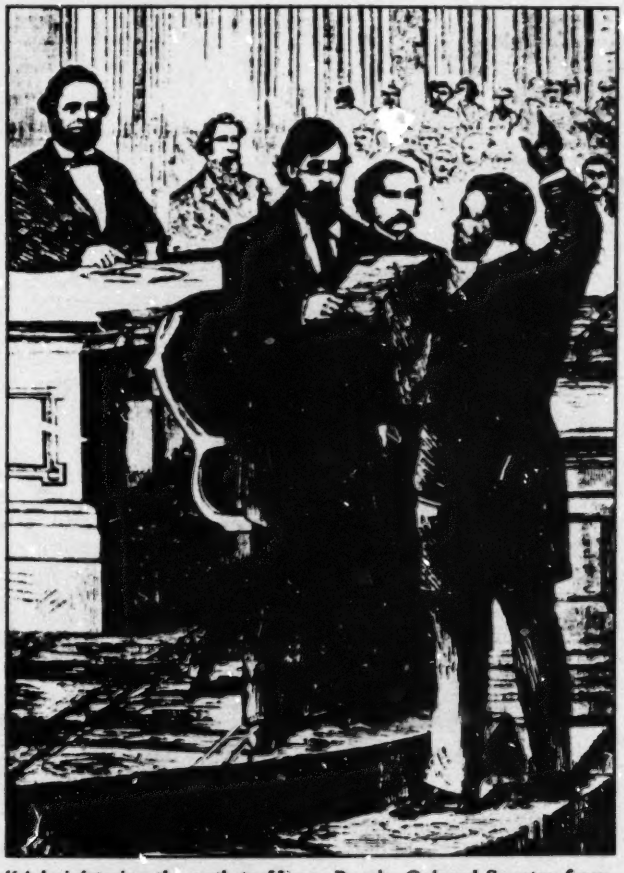

"Administering the oath to Hiram Revels, Colored Senator from the State of Mississippi, in the Senate Chamber of the United States, on Friday, February 25, 1870. Sketched by our special artist." This drawing appeared in Frank Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper *March 12, 1870. From the CAAS Historical Photograph Collection.*

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National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism (NIAAA), the National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA), and the National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH). In addition, the massive NIH itself includes twelve different funding institutes (e.g., National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute, National Institute on Aging) and a number of very large funding divisions (e.g., Division of Research Resources).

Responses with data were received from ADAMHA, NIH, NSF, and NEH. While the responses differed in completeness and relevance with respect to the information desired, we are able to discern noteworthy patterns in recent support for Afro-American Studies research.

While we requested information on funding patterns over the last ten years, much of the data received were not that extensive. Since the effect of the Reagan administration's changes should be most evident over the last six years, this analysis will be focused primarily on the years 1978 through 1983. The first section will explore whether social science and humanities funding generally has suffered more relative to "hard" science funding. The second section examines trends in support for Afro-American related research specifically.

The Fate of the Social Sciences and the Humanities

Social science funding

Whether a shift has occurred to focus on the "hard" sciences over the social sciences is evident from a report entitled "Federal Funds for Research and Development." This document, prepared by the National Science Foundation, lists federal obligations for research by all government agencies (excluding the National Endowments for the Arts and Humanities) and by detailed field of science. Table 1 lists amounts in thousands of dollars actually obligated for basic research over all agencies by field for the years 1978 through 1982; estimates are given for 1983 and 1984. The table demonstrates that support for mathematical and computer sciences increased by nearly 2½ times; the life sciences as a whole, the physical sciences, and engineering virtually doubled from 1978 to 1984. During the same period psychology increased by only 25 percent and support for the social sciences (i.e., anthropology, economics, political science, sociology, and other related fields) increased by a mere 10 percent. (The report makes a distinction between psychology and the other social sciences.) Considering the "double-digit" inflation that characterized the late 1970s, it is clear that social science support did not even keep pace with the ever-rising cost of living.

If we focus only on the agencies most inclined to support Afro-American Studies research — the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), ADAMHA, and NIH — the pattern appears to be less detrimental to the social sciences if one only measures the difference between actual support in 1978 and 1984 expectations. However, as table 2 indicates, a steady increase in support for the social sciences in the years 1979 through 1981 was halted in 1982. In fact, 1982 was a catastrophic year for support in certain agencies; NIH's 1982 support for social science was less than half what it had been in the previous year, decreasing from nearly ten million dollars to less than four million. Furthermore, even the 1983 and 1984 estimates show levels that are half the 1980 and 1981 obligated amounts. Over the same period life science support doubled. And while NIH psychology support also doubled, the expected 1984 amounts obligated for the social sciences and psychology together represented only 1 percent of total NIH obligations!

It might be argued that ADAMHA and HHS are more natural areas than NIH for social science support. The figures do indicate that ADAMHA is the most likely source of social science support. For both social science and psychology, total obligations doubled between 1978 and 1984, with total support for these disciplines amounting to 40 percent of the total 1984 expected ADAMHA obligations. When support for these disciplines is viewed as the percent of total obligations, a distinction between funding of psychological research and research in the other social sciences is evident. While psychology funding actually increased through 1982, a sharp decline in social science support was evident in 1981. However, support for work in psychology and the other social sciences is expected to decline in 1983 and 1984.

In contrast to ADAMHA, HHS support for psychology and social science seems surprisingly low, representing only 4 percent of the total research obligations in 1984 (which is slightly less than the 1978 percentage of support). The percent of support for these disciplines peaked in 1980, declined in 1981, and is expected to remain at the 1981 level through 1984. However, considering the

Table 1
Federal Obligations for Basic Research, Total All Agencies
Fiscal years 1978-1984
(thousands of dollars)

	1978	1979	1980	1981	1982	1983[1]	1984[1]
Total all fields	3,698,604	4,192,655	4,674,156	5,041,295	5,481,605	6,086,013	6,615,380
Psychology	84,049	75,069	84,206	90,992	89,875	99,017	105,190
Social Sciences	124,347	129,718	147,180	136,951	120,198	125,169	136,364
Engineering	375,985	434,658	465,228	526,018	610,467	665,455	786,041
Environmental Sciences	451,278	457,284	522,360	532,833	520,049	560,316	605,396
Life Sciences	1,588,390	1,891,777	2,054,425	2,223,848	2,526,017	2,796,346	2,926,573
Math & Computer Sciences	97,737	104,164	116,258	140,360	165,064	195,780	239,993
Physical Sciences	941,421	1,050,002	1,220,588	1,324,940	1,393,844	1,556,765	1,731,484
Other	35,397	49,993	63,991	65,353	56,091	87,165	83,793

Source: National Science Foundation, *Federal Funds for Research and Development*, n.d.
[1]Estimates only.

Table 2

Federal Obligations for Basic Research in Psychology and Social Science with Percent of All Fields Total by Discipline for ADAMHA, HHS and NIH: Fiscal years 1978-1984

(thousands of dollars)

	1978	1979	1980	1981	1982	1983[1]	1984[1]
ADAMHA							
Total all fields	79,917	94,622	104,736	116,309	117,331	137,332	154,504
Psychology	24,822 (31.1)	26,122 (27.6)	30,035 (28.7)	34,652 (29.8)	38,151 (32.5)	43,455 (31.2)	47,575 (30.8)
Social Science	7,289 (9.1)	9,253 (9.8)	12,175 (11.6)	10,321 (8.9)	11,039 (9.4)	12,516 (9.1)	14,431 (9.3)
HHS							
Total all fields	1,274,063	1,576,011	1,762,668	1,900,384	2,144,694	2,388,397	2,468,104
Psychology	35,272 (2.8)	40,098 (2.5)	49,721 (2.8)	58,985 (3.1)	57,276 (2.7)	64,772 (2.7)	69,474 (2.8)
Social Science	19,290 (1.5)	28,347 (1.8)	34,237 (1.9)	33,187 (1.7)	20,908 (1.0)	23,300 (1.0)	26,676 (1.1)
NIH							
Total all fields	1,181,094	1,463,703	1,642,341	1,766,788	2,202,650	2,243,944	2,305,135
Psychology	10,450 (.9)	13,976 (1.0)	19,686 (1.2)	24,333 (1.4)	19,125 (.9)	21,317 (.9)	21,899 (1.0)
Social Science	1,808 (.2)	3,396 (.2)	8,503 (.5)	9,482 (.5)	3,756 (.2)	4,263 (.2)	4,380 (.2)

Source: National Science Foundation, *Federal Funds for Research and Development*, n.d.
Note: Figures in parentheses indicate percent of "all fields total" represented by discipline total.
[1]Estimates only.

relatively small size of the ADAMHA total budget (compared to HHS and NIH), the 4 percent support for social science research through HHS far outstrips ADAMHA support in terms of total dollars committed. Even from the perspective of dollars as opposed to percentages, NIH support remains exceedingly low.

Humanities funding

How did the humanities fare over the same period? NEH, the primary source of federal support for work in the humanities, provided us with information on the total funds obligated yearly from 1977 through 1983. (We did not receive information from NEA which, although focused on the arts, supports some work that may fall within the humanities.) It is instructive to compare the above "hard" and social science figures with the NEH funding and how that total has changed over the years of interest.

Table 3

Total NEH Dollars Obligated by Year

1977	116,801,690
1978	148,979,748
1979	185,063,446
1980	142,589,466
1981	144,366,330
1982	115,818,324
1983	123,314,689

Table 3 shows a striking decline in available funds for years 1980 through 1982. While the funding in 1983 increased somewhat, the figure is substantially below that available for any year since 1977.

It is worth emphasizing that support for the humanities through the national endowment has never exceeded 185 million dollars, while federal support for basic research in the sciences discussed earlier was expected to be over 6½ billion in 1984.

Summary

It seems clear from these data that funding for research in social science and the humanities has not kept pace with the substantial increases apparent in the "hard" sciences. In terms of overall federal support (i.e., across agencies), the total available funding in 1984 for psychology and social science is probably less in real terms (given inflation) than the amount available in 1978. Humanities support through the NEH has suffered a clear and dramatic decline. Since ethnic studies support is primarily derived within these fields, it is reasonable to assume that ethnic studies research has suffered accordingly. It must be recognized too that this shift in focus is the deliberate programmatic intent of the Reagan Administration as an announced component of its Program for Economic Recovery.

Changes in Afro-American Studies Support

While a change in the level of support for Afro-American Studies research can be inferred from the above figures, a clearer determination would depend on an examination of actual funds devoted to such research. Unfortunately, our recent data-gathering experience suggests that this information is not easily obtained. Some agencies professed that such statistics are not maintained, while others provided only a partial listing of the information we desired. ADAMHA sent us reports on "Black" research funded through the National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH) and through the

Center for Studies of Minority Group Mental Health (a component of NIMH hereafter referred to as the "Minority Center"). NIH provided a report on their "activities related to Black Americans" and an extensive listing of all projects funded through NIH since 1973 which were classified as "Afro-American related." NEH sent a list of all funds awarded for "Black related" projects in fiscal year 1983 and levels of funding for ethnic studies research since 1977. Therefore, while the information obtained is in no sense complete, it is possible to make some determination of trends in Afro-American research support for selected federal agencies.

National Institute of Mental Health

Data supplied by NIMH, as displayed in tables 4 and 5, indicate that the total funds available for minority research generally and Afro-American research specifically have actually increased over the six-year period. Once again, however, close inspection reveals disturbing trends in the pattern of awarding. The year 1979 was pivotal and signaled a dramatic increase in NIMH support of ethnic research. In 1981, though, a two-year decline in the number and amount of awards began. While the number of projects funded in 1983 represented a significant increase, it remained less than the 1979 and 1980 levels. The 17 million dollar level of support was only 5.3 percent above the 1980 figure.

Also of significance is the degree of relevance to ethnic studies exhibited by funded projects. The NIMH reports divide relevance into four groups: *major* (major focus on one of the five major U.S. ethnic/racial groups), *partial* (focus on the five major ethnic/racial groups but part of a larger study), *general* (focus on other U.S. minorities or minority/majority relations), *subject* (one of major ethnic/racial groups is a substantial part of the study, but race or ethnicity is not analyzed). Table 4 shows a dramatic decline by 1983 in the number of funded projects with *major* relevance to ethnic minorities.

Table 5 demonstrates that NIMH support for Black-related research has consistently exceeded support for studies of other major ethnic groups. Dollar amounts directed toward each ethnic group are available only for years 1978 through 1980, while 1982 and 1983 figures refer to the percentage of total number of grants funded (the meaning of the percent figure for 1981 is unclear). These figures suggest, however, that the proportion of NIMH ethnic minority funding directed toward Afro-Americans (relative to other major ethnic groups) has not declined. [While the percentage of numbers of grants may not precisely reflect the percent of amounts awarded — due to differing numbers of extremely large or very small grants — some relationship certainly exists.]

This last finding may be surprising to many, given the media attention directed toward Hispanic/Latino and Asian/Pacific concerns. It may simply be that the emphasis has not yet resulted in changes in the funding patterns of this particular agency, for the patterns must still reflect to some extent the number and quality of proposals received. Examination of the most recent funding patterns of the NIMH Minority Center does indicate a rather dramatic shift in Black and Asian funding. Black research support dropped from 41 percent in 1982 to 29 percent in 1983 while Asian/Pacific funding increased from 7 percent to 17 percent during the same period. Since the Minority Center is charged with the responsibility of stimulating minority research (among other tasks), Asian/Pacific research (an area of relatively little previous activity) may have been emphasized at that time. This development, however, did not change the overall pattern of NIMH funding of ethnic research.

Table 4
NIMH Minority Grants: 1978-1983
(funds in thousands of dollars)

Year	No. of Minority Grants	Percent of Major[1] Relevance	Total Funds	Percent of NIMH Funds/Awards
1978	47	31%	3,200	n/a
1979	142	54%	15,300	16% NIMH funds
1980	135	53%	16,400	16% NIMH funds
1981	109	50%	14,000	15% NIMH awards
1982	104	47%	13,736	15% NIMH awards
1983	125	33%	17,269	22% NIMH grants with human subjects

Source: Office of Minority Concerns, National Institute of Mental Health.
[1]Projects with a major focus on one of the five major U.S. ethnic/racial groups.

Table 5
NIMH Minority Grants by Ethnic/Racial Group
Fiscal years 1978-1983
(thousands of dollars)

Ethnic/ Racial Group	1978	1979	1980	1981	1982	1983
Black	1,400 (44%)[1]	6,300 (41%)[1]	8,000 (48%)[1]	n/a (44%)[2]	n/a (50%)[3]	n/a (58%)[3]
Hispanic	600 (18%)	3,500 (23%)	3,500 (21%)	n/a (19%)	n/a (18%)	n/a (14%)
Asian-American	260 (8%)	1,200 (8%)	900 (5%)	n/a (6%)	n/a (9%)	n/a (7%)
Native American	400 (12%)	1,200 (8%)	1,000 (6%)	n/a (7%)	n/a (6%)	n/a (5%)
Multiple	250 (8%)	2,400 (16%)	3,000 (18%)	n/a (22%)	n/a (14%)	n/a (15%)
Other	300 (10%)	700 (4%)	400 (2%)	n/a (2%)	n/a (3%)	n/a (2%)

Source: Office of Minority Concerns, National Institute of Mental Health.
[1]Percent of dollar amount awarded for research on each ethnic group.
[2]Whether percent of dollar amount or number of awards is unclear.
[3]Percent of number of awards made for research on each ethnic group.

National Institutes of Health

It is not possible to compile a similar profile based on the information obtained from NIH. While we received detailed information on each Afro-American related project funded (including title, principal investigator, abstract, etc.) the material did not include dollar amounts awarded. Nevertheless it is possible to determine how many projects a given NIH agency supports and the extent to which those projects are of major Afro-American relevance.

Given the extensive nature of the data sent by NIH, for the present article we conducted only a preliminary review limited to those projects funded through NIH only during the years 1982 and 1983. We learned the following: 1) A relatively small number of grants with Afro-American relevance were awarded. Over the sixteen NIH granting institutes and large divisions, only 137 awards in 1982 and 150 in 1983 were made. This number is astonishingly low when compared to the number awarded through NIMH (discussed earlier). 2) In both years, 50 percent of all projects designated as having relevance to Afro-American issues were funded through either the Heart, Lung and Blood Institute (HLBI) or the National Institute on Child Health and Human Development (NICHD) rather than through one of the other 14 funding units. 3) When we used project titles and abstracts to code for degree of relevance to Afro-American issues (i.e., a central focus on Afro-American issues vs. the use of Afro-Americans for comparative purposes only vs. no apparent relevance), only about a quarter of the projects in each year could be classified as having primary relevance (see table 6). When the contents of these grants are examined further, we learn that eleven (45.8 percent) of the 1982 primary focus projects and fifteen (38.5 percent) of those funded in 1983 consisted of research on sickle cell anemia (all funded through HLBI).

Table 6
NIH Grants and Degree of Relevance to Afro-American Issues

	1982	1983
Relevance		
Primary	24 (24.8%)	39 (26.0%)
Comparative	90 (65.7%)	73 (48.7%)
Relevance not apparent	13 (9.5%)	38 (25.3%)

National Endowment for the Humanities

The NEH summaries of support for research relating to Blacks, Hispanics, and Native Americans over the years 1977 through 1983 are not broken down by ethnic group. An assessment of support for all ethnic projects, including percentages of total NEH support, is shown in table 7. Other information provided by NEH for 1983 indicates that support for "Black-related" projects that year totaled $3.6 million, which represents 49.2 percent of the total NEH support for the three major ethnic groups.

Several aspects of the data in table 7 are striking. First, after a steady increase from 1977 through 1980, the level of 1983 support reached a new low for the years following 1976. Second, the overall proportion of minority funding is relatively low, especially when compared to NIMH figures (although the latter include Asian/Pacific support while NEH summaries do not). Third, with the exception of 1983, the number of projects funded is not entirely proportionate to the amount of funding received. This appears to indicate that ethnic projects receive less funding per project than nonethnic studies.

NEH also sent a list of all "minority-related" projects funded in fiscal year 1983, including titles and descriptions. When the sixty Black-related projects were assessed for degree of relevance, it was determined that 85 percent of the funded projects had a primary focus on Afro-American related issues. So, while there is relatively little support for ethnic research in the humanities, Afro-American related projects funded through NEH are extremely likely to be of primary relevance to Afro-American concerns. In addition, a fairly substantial portion of NEH funding for ethnic minority research is still directed toward Afro-American studies.

Table 7
NEH Grants for Minority-Related Projects
(amounts in thousands of dollars)

Year	*Number of Projects*	*Amount Obligated*
1977	139 (6.8%)[1]	5,547 (4.7%)[1]
1978	186 (6.9%)	7,025 (4.7%)
1979	264 (10.2%)	10,258 (5.5%)
1980	289 (10.0%)	10,692 (7.5%)
1981	n/a	n/a
1982	n/a	n/a
1983	114 (6.0%)	7,345 (6.0%)

[1]Percentages of total NEH support as shown in table 3.
Figures for 1981 and 1982 are unavailable.

Conclusions and Questions

While notions of funding cuts and a decline in support for Afro-American research have been aired for some time, an actual accounting of the "state of Afro-American funding" has been lacking. While this assessment has been far from complete, it demonstrates that there is cause for great concern among Afro-Americanists who depend on external funds to support their research efforts. It is clear that Afro-American research is being affected by the substantial shift in federal priorities toward the "hard" sciences and away from the social sciences and the humanities. Only the National Institute of Mental Health has continued to emphasize Afro-American-related research — and even within this agency the number of studies of major relevance has recently decreased. Furthermore, the NIMH total budget represents a very small proportion of the total federal research budget. To get a relatively large piece of something very small is a questionable gain.

Are there changes in the wind?

Dr. Delores L. Parron was recently named NIMH's first Associate Director for Minority Concerns (an office established by the 1983 Public Health Services Act). As outlined under the provisions of Public Law 96-398, included among the eight functions of the associate director is a responsibility to "support programs of basic and applied social and behavioral research on the mental health problems of minority populations." As NIMH has been designated as ADAMHA's lead institute for minority concerns, Parron is responsible for coordinating minority programs and activities throughout ADAMHA. [Since the National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA) and the National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism (NIAAA) both fund ethnic projects at far lower levels than does NIMH they should be prime areas for Parron's attention.]

Dr. Parron informed me in a recent telephone conversation that she works with ADAMHA divisions to develop mechanisms for funding projects by, for example, looking for areas where the interests of ethnic minorities can be served. Parron also said that a ten-year review of ADAMHA funding and minority concerns was just conducted and will be available in fiscal year 1985. This review

included assessments of the proposal review process through examination of the "pink sheets" prepared on each submission.

Parron also cautioned that her office is small, has few staff, and a fairly small budget and is therefore limited in the amount that it can accomplish. It is encouraging to note, nevertheless, that someone is committed to making positive changes in the pattern of funding for ethnic-related research in ADAMHA. It remains ironic, however, that the agency that is already most actively engaged in supporting such efforts (i.e., NIMH) appears to be the only one actively pursuing this goal. (It may be that we are simply unaware of similar efforts elsewhere in the federal government.)

Other concerted efforts to stimulate research on the concerns of ethnic minorities generally and Afro-Americans specifically appear to be minimal. Earlier this year, the National Cancer Institute (NCI) issued two Requests for Applications (RFAs) addressing the prevention and cessation of tobacco use on the U.S. Black and Hispanic populations, respectively. The National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute (NHLBI) sponsors a program for research on the cause, prevention, and treatment of sickle cell disease, which amounted to approximately 17 million dollars of support in fiscal year 1983. In addition, although the NSF phased out a number of its "minority-focused" programs in 1982, it currently supports two programs aimed at increasing minority participation in research: the Research Initiation at Minority Institutions program (directed primarily at historically Black colleges) and the Minority Research Initiation Program. The NSF programs are geared toward increasing the number of ethnic minority researchers rather than ethnic research per se.

Solutions?

Given this discouraging state of affairs, what steps might be taken to address these deficiencies in support for Afro-American research? We might consider the actions taken by psychologists in the form of the Association for the Advancement of Psychology. The organization's lobbying efforts have been intense. The March 1981 issue of their newsletter, *Advance*, which was mailed to every member of the American Psychological Association, outlined the expected impact of the intended Reagan budget cuts on areas of concern to psychologists. Readers were told how they could let responsible individuals know their feelings about the matter (e.g., an article entitled "Tips on Writing Members of Congress"). From the figures presented in this article, it is clear that psychology was not affected nearly as negatively as other social science disciplines. Could this be because of psychology's aggressive defense of psychological research as a priority?

As a rule, scholars of ethnic studies have not made concerted efforts to counter these drastic shifts in funding priorities or to influence funding policies generally. It can be argued that new nonfederal sources of research funding are needed, sources that would free recipients from the burden of meeting government priorities. It remains the responsibility of the federal government, however, to sponsor research that addresses the conditions of all of its citizenry. A substantial portion of the billions of dollars appropriated to support research should rightfully be focused on Afro-American concerns.

Specific knowledge of the state of Afro-American funding is a beginning. While this general assessment provides global indicators of actual funding patterns, it does not approach the areas of proposal solicitation, proposal submission, the peer review process, or prioritization of approved projects within agencies. What proportion of submitted Afro-American proposals are approved? What proportion are funded? Is the peer review process adequately equipped to handle ethnic-related research proposals? These questions represent critical elements of the funding process. They must be asked more frequently of more agencies.

A basic premise for the present discussion is the belief that the fate of Afro-American Studies as a field is very much a function of research funding. Empirical viability may determine a department's or program's success within the host institution (particularly in large research universities), its ability to attract superior scholars and students, and the degree of seriousness accorded it by the community at large. Individual scholars who fail to conduct high quality research are deprived of the opportunity to do so as they are eliminated from the academic institutions that are best able to support research activities. The data presented here indicate that the field is in the midst of "troubled times." In the interests of the future of Afro-American Studies we cannot ignore such signs.